

Notes

Statewide Quality Improvement Committee

1/25/2010

2 Hours

Multi-Agency State Office Building
195 North 1950 West, Room 1019A
Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

Attendees:

Carol Miller, Carolyn Jensen, Chris Chytraus, Jenny Arm, Julie Steele, Katie Gregory, Lisa McDonald, Reba Nissen, Rick Smith

Unable to Attend:

Karen Buchi, Karla Pardini, Katy Larsen, Marjean Searcy, Trish Beck

Meeting Topics

15	Welcome, grab lunch, introductions	Rick Smith
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Discussion:

Rick welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made.

30	Four regional meetings re. DEC	Julie Steele
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Discussion:

Julie talked about the Drug Endangered Child Alliance and the purpose of that group. There is an offshoot of that group that looks at best practice for child welfare services. This smaller group created some guidelines and brought those to the Court Improvement Project. They are looking into the needs of drug endangered children and how to provide training around best practice for child welfare services. They want to involve the Regional QICs and tailor the training to the needs of the specific region.

Julie handed out a proposal for regional meetings around a multi-agency approach to drug endangered children. Marjean Searcy let Chris know that law enforcement will be able to cover the cost of travel, but not food. Julie wanted feedback from the group about this proposal. Chris stated that the rural areas might benefit most from these meetings.

Julie proposed that we do a survey to find out what information the regions feel they would benefit the most from. It would be a multi-agency team that would go out to the regions to hold these meetings. It would also be beneficial to have local representatives attend the meetings. Each meeting would be about two hours long. Rick asked if the juvenile court judges could be invited to attend, and Julie said they could definitely do that. The panels would be pulled from Salt Lake, but would be open to involve local community members. The DEC group is creating the panel talking points at this time.

Julie asked how we best communicate this to the regions. Reba suggested using the quarterly QIC meeting to make this proposal.

Conclusions:

The committee approved this proposal.

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

February 17, 2010 is the next quarterly meeting. Julie will make the presentation to the QICs at that meeting.

Julie Steele

60

Interface between DCFS and the Office of Licensing

Rick Smith

Discussion:

Rick gave a recap of the issues around the interface between DCFS and the Office of Licensing. The Utah Foster Care Foundation has received feedback from potential foster parents regarding frustration around the amount of time it takes to become licensed after they have completed training; DCFS has expressed frustration that the Office of Licensing does not feel the same sense of urgency about getting families licensed; and the standards for home studies used by both agencies are different.

Rick spent the last couple of months gathering additional information around this issue. He gave two reports to the group for review. Page 4 of the report, "Licensing and Kinship Workgroup, Kinship Processes, Issues, and Recommendations" includes recommendations for further study. The report, "Licensing and Kinship Workgroup, Foster Care Licensing Issues and Recommendations" looked further at these recommendations. From this report, additional recommendations on how to improve the foster parent licensing process were made. These reports are from 2008, so these issues need to be revisited.

As a result of these studies, a Memorandum of Understanding was entered into between DCFS and the Office of Licensing. This Memorandum of Understanding only applies to kinship placements and child-specific licenses, but not all foster parents.

Rick has gathered additional information from current and previous foster parents about their experience in getting licensed and being foster parents. Rick stated that he and his wife were foster parents for a time, and they experienced some frustration with the home study and licensing process, especially with the annual renewal process. One of the recommendations from the report is to have the renewal be less frequently than annually, or to make it a less cumbersome process.

Rick said that Utah is the only state in the nation where the agency does not license its own families. This causes barriers to placing children with appropriate families. In Utah we need families that will take teens into their homes, but there are so many barriers because of the licensing process. Chris stated that the Office of Licensing issues licenses to other agencies who then license their own families, so it would make sense for DCFS to be able to license their own families. Several years ago, DCFS was able to license its own families, but the Office of Licensing was created and the responsibility for licensing families became part of its function.

Julie asked if there has been an impact since the Christmas Box House is no longer used as shelters. Lisa explained that she knows shelter parents who are frustrated because they are not utilized and they do not receive placements. She also said that the Northern Region QIC has issued a report about the number of and reasons for disruptions in that region. Many of these disruptions were because the foster parent did not want to adopt.

Conclusions:

The process needs to be streamlined and the recommendations from the report need to be implemented. Julie suggested having someone from the Office of Licensing attend a meeting and explain their process. It would also be helpful to know the history of why the Office of Licensing was created.

Rick suggested the committee make a recommendation on what needs to happen at this point. He would like our recommendations to go to Duane Betournay and Lisa-Michele Church. Lisa stated that this has been a huge issue for a very long time, so it needs to be made a priority in the Department.

Julie made a motion to support Rick's suggestion to send a letter to Duane and Lisa-Michele. Karla seconded the motion. The motion passed.

<u>Action items:</u>	<u>Person responsible:</u>	<u>Deadline:</u>
Lisa will see if she can find out the history of why licensing was separated from DCFS. She will forward that email to Rick.	Lisa McDonald	
Rick will draft a letter to DHS and DCFS administration with these recommendations. DCFS will have 30 days from receipt of that letter to respond in writing to the committee.	Rick Smith	

15	Membership, other housekeeping, and agenda for next meeting: February 22, 2010	Rick Smith
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Discussion:

Membership: Jenny previously made a suggestion for a new committee member, and she will follow-up to see if this person is still interested. Reba also knows a person who is interested in joining the committee. The group approved recruitment of these people. The group talked about what to do with members who habitually do not attend the meetings. Lisa suggested having a conversation with these people to see if they can send someone in their place or, if they are no longer interested in participating on the committee, seeking a replacement for them. Julie said it has been helpful to have prior clients be involved on the committee, but it has been a challenge to keep these people participating on the committee. Lisa has been trying to recruit prior consumers to become involved with this committee. Reba suggested that Jode Littlepage, DCFS TAL liaison, may have suggestions to pursue.

Citizen Review Panel: Reba gave a handout with information from a technical consultant who has offered his services in how this committee can be utilized as a citizen review panel. Reba asked the committee if they are interested in utilizing his services. He can come and present to our committee utilizing grant monies, or we can have him attend by phone. Rick stated that the committee struggles with meeting the citizen review panel requirements.

Jenny suggested seeing if he can be utilized for the next annual QIC Summit. Katie suggested we find out more about his services to make sure they fit our needs.

February 22, 2010 meeting: Review what the CPS workgroup is currently looking into, receive a legislative update, receive an update from the quarterly QIC meeting, and get updated information about Blake Jones. The governor has issued a directive that food purchases for meetings are no longer allowed, so the committee decided to move the meeting time from 3 to 5pm.

<u>Action items:</u>	<u>Person responsible:</u>	<u>Deadline:</u>
Jenny will send contact information to Reba for follow-up.	Jenny Arm	
Reba will send an email to Rick with a list of committee member names who do not regularly attend the meetings.	Reba Nissen	
Reba will contact Blake Jones and find out who employs him, where his funding comes from, who he provides consultation to, and what his goal for providing consultation is. She will also obtain copies of the "Selected Publications" listed on the handout.	Reba Nissen	
Reba will ask Charri to attend the February meeting.	Reba Nissen	

Resource persons: Carol Miller, Katy Larsen, Reba Nissen